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Published October 12, 2006

Dad reveals horror of Ricky's final days

Tim Holland testifies son was hurt, too weak to eat and in near-catatonic state

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

In gut-wrenching testimony Wednesday, Tim Holland described the last week of his adopted son Ricky's life: The boy was in a near-catatonic state, not eating or drinking and often incapable of supporting his small body.

Upon his return from an out-of-town trip just seven days before Ricky died, Tim Holland said he found the boy wearing only a diaper in their Williamston home, a large cut on the top of his head.

Ricky's hair was matted down with blood; he was dirty and smelled of cat urine.

"He didn't even acknowledge me coming into the house," Tim Holland said.

A week later, Tim Holland came home after buying his wife, Lisa, a treat and found Ricky dead; Lisa Holland was in the hallway screaming, "I didn't mean to do it."

Tim Holland - the prosecution's key witness - took the stand Wednesday in the murder trial of Lisa Holland. She is charged with murder and child abuse in Ricky's death.

Prosecutors are relying on Tim Holland to help paint a picture of a woman who



(Photo by BECKY SHINK/Lansing State Journal)
Gut-wrenching testimony: Tim Holland testifies Wednesday against his wife, Lisa Holland, during her murder trial in Lansing. He described how he found their 7-year-old adopted son, Ricky, in his bedroom on a Friday night last year, with no heartbeat or pulse. He said his wife was in the house.

TRIAL RECAP

Week 1, Sept. 18-22:

- In opening arguments, prosecutors say the case against Lisa Holland is about manipulation, deception and concealment. Defense attorneys counter the prosecution's key witness, Tim Holland, is not credible and his guilty plea was intended solely to protect himself.
- A Jackson County social worker testifies that in February 2001, Ricky said Lisa Holland tied him up at night. The social worker filed a report with Child Protective Services, but the report was not substantiated.
- Jackson school officials testify the Ricky they knew was not the same boy described and often disparaged by Lisa Holland.
- Testimony also reveals Ricky was removed from elementary school by his parents after it was determined he did not qualify for the special education services.

Week 2, Sept. 25-29:

- Investigators found tiny blood stains in several rooms of Tim and Lisa Holland's Williamston home, a state police forensic scientist testifies.
- A new portrait of Lisa Holland emerges in court: A loving mother who frequently called her family physician with child-rearing questions. But testimony also revealed a doctor last saw Ricky on Sept. 20, 2002.

humiliated, abused and eventually killed her son. Tim Holland, who reported Ricky missing the morning of July 2, 2005, already has pleaded guilty to second--degree murder in the case and has admitted he disposed of the boy's body.

Lisa Holland's defense attorneys contend Tim Holland is not credible and that his guilty plea was intended solely to protect himself.

Tim Holland admitted Wednesday to Lisa Holland's co-counsel Andrew Abood he lied to investigators several times about what happened in the case.

Abood is expected to continue questioning Tim Holland today. The trial is in its fourth week.

'Cold to my touch'

Tim Holland - at the time a civilian employee with the Army - said he returned on June 24, 2005, from an out-of-town assignment to find Ricky injured. The boy wasn't speaking coherently and spent most of his time in his bedroom.

Lisa Holland said Ricky had dived head-first into a kiddie pool bought by her mother. Tim Holland said the pool wasn't even set up.

The next day, Tim Holland testified, he tried to take Ricky to a doctor, but Lisa "grabbed his free hand and yanked him away from me ... and said she was going to take him."

Lisa and Ricky left for two or three hours, he testified. When they returned, blood still was in the boy's hair and there were no stitches.

Tim Holland could not recall Ricky eating anything from June 24 until July 1. He added: "Ricky was cold to my touch."

Legs like lead

On July 1, the day he said Ricky died, Tim Holland testified, the boy's eyelids were half open, his legs like lead.

When his favorite show, "SpongeBob SquarePants," was on TV, Ricky didn't pay attention, Tim

- Lisa Holland's hairdresser testifies that as hundreds of people searched for Ricky in early July 2005, Holland told her "she just needed to go on with her life."

- A Williamston neighbor who lived across the street from the Hollands describes an incident in May 2005 when he found Ricky in his kitchen. "They don't want me anymore," the neighbor testifies Ricky said.

Week 3, Oct. 2-5

- A former Ingham County Jail inmate testifies Lisa Holland told her Ricky made her angry, so she threw a hammer at the boy's head. She then picked it up and hit Ricky again.

- A nurse at Ricky's Jackson elementary school testifies she reported suspected abuse to Child Protective Services at least twice.

- A second jail inmate testified Lisa Holland confessed to killing Ricky. But Holland's defense attorneys focus on how Tim Holland lied to investigators several times in the case, including in a Jan. 27 statement to police during which he told authorities Lisa killed Ricky by striking him with a hammer.

- A video recorded interview of Lisa Holland talking with police is played for the jury, during which Lisa speculated her husband might tell police that she hit Ricky and that he then fell into a wall.

- A weekend interview with Tim Holland yielded new information about how Ricky died, prosecutors said. As a result, a forensic pathologist is expected to update the boy's cause of death. The revelation led the judge to postpone the trial a day.

This week

- Prosecutors show a 2005 TV interview with Lisa and Tim Holland where the couple begs for the safe return of Ricky, trying to show the couple's statements after the boy was reported missing were nothing but a ruse.

- A forensic scientist testifies a T-shirt stained with Ricky's blood provides clues as to how he was killed. Most the blood — which probably came from a wound on the back or top of Ricky's head — either dripped from his hair or brushed against the shirt like a paintbrush, said Ann Gordon of the Michigan State Police.

On the Web:

- [VIDEO: Tim Holland testifies in court](#)
- [Audio slide show: In his own words - Tim Holland one year ago](#)

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Holland said. That night at dinner, Ricky had to be propped up in his chair and braced against the table.

Tim Holland said he put Ricky to bed, helped Lisa get their other children in bed, then went to a gas station to buy Lisa a treat.

He testified that when he came back, Lisa's father, Tom Taylor - who had come by earlier in the day - was sitting in an easy chair by the door. Tim Holland said he asked him what he was still doing there and that he told Lisa that Taylor needed to leave.

Tim Holland described his wife as agitated, nervous and upset.

He said he could see a light on in Ricky's bedroom. He started to go there, but she insisted they go to bed.

Holland sobbed Wednesday as he testified he walked into the bedroom, saw Ricky lying in bed in the fetal position, with "red stuff all over his face and down the front of his shirt."

Ricky didn't have a pulse, and Holland said he couldn't hear a heartbeat.

After Ricky died

A day after Ricky died, Lisa Holland calmly shredded the blood-stained T-shirt Ricky likely was wearing when he suffered a fatal head wound, Tim Holland testified.

As a police officer stood in the driveway of their Williamston home and the search for Ricky was under way, she then placed the T-shirt strips inside a Ziploc bag and stashed it in a backpack's front compartment.

The strips were to be used as diaper wipes for the couple's other children, Tim Holland said.

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Dad let Ricky suffer to please his wife

He tells jury that injured boy, 7, shut down in his last days

BY JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

October 12, 2006

LANSING -- Arriving home after four days of military intelligence training in Virginia, Tim Holland walked in the front door of his Williamston-area home on June 24, 2005, and was surprised to see his 7-year-old son, Ricky, standing nearly naked against a blood-spattered wall.

On the top of Ricky's head, Holland said, was a 1- to-2-inch cut that was "all crusty and his hair was matted down on it. It was all a scab on a scab."

Worse, Ricky seemed almost comatose, unaware of anything as he stood wearing only a pull-up diaper in the spot between the TV set and the DVD cabinet where his mother always sent him for punishment.

Ricky "didn't even acknowledge me coming in the house," Holland testified Wednesday in the trial of his wife, Lisa Holland, who is charged with open murder and child abuse in Ricky's death. "Usually, I'm mobbed by all the children."

For the next seven days, Tim Holland told the jury in Ingham County Circuit Court, Ricky never spoke, never got out of bed by himself, never dressed himself, never was bathed, never stood up without help and never swallowed a bite of food or drank a sip of water.

The boy stank, Holland said, "like cat urine."

And his parents never got him medical help, although Holland said he started to take Ricky to a hospital June 25 only to be stopped by his wife, prompting a shoving match witnessed by some of their other four children.

"She jerked him out of my hands," Holland, 37, testified, referring to Ricky. "Lisa had intense hatred for Ricky. She didn't like anything about him."

When Ingham County Assistant Prosecutor Mike Ferency asked Holland why he didn't do anything more to help Ricky, Holland said: "I didn't want to piss Lisa off. I didn't want to. I'd already tried to take Ricky to the hospital once. I just didn't want to make her mad."

Over the next several days, Holland testified, Ricky's body shut down.



Assistant Prosecutor Mike Ferency questions Lisa Holland's husband in Judge Paula Manderfield's courtroom in Lansing. (BECKY SHINK/Lansing State Journal)

On the day Ricky died, July 1, 2005, Holland said that at first, he thought Ricky was getting better because the boy sat up in bed by himself. But, when he looked closer, he saw that Ricky's legs were frozen straight out and his knees would not bend.

He said Ricky walked stiff-legged with his father's help to the living room, where Holland propped him against a couch near the television and put on Ricky's favorite show, "SpongeBob SquarePants."

"He didn't even look at it," Holland said.

The family had Kentucky Fried Chicken for dinner, and Tim Holland said he prepared a plate of Ricky's favorite food -- drumsticks and mashed potatoes -- before bringing Ricky to the kitchen and helping him onto a chair, pushing it against the table to keep him from falling to the floor.

"He was sitting with his hands in his lap and pushed against the table, staring, like looking right at the food," Holland said. "He wasn't holding his head up."

Holland said he tried to give Ricky something to drink. He said he put a cup to Ricky's lips and squeezed his cheeks to open his mouth.

"Fluid just came running out of the sides of his mouth," Holland said.

Ricky was known for his eating problems, but Holland said his wife wanted Ricky to eat coleslaw -- which Ricky hated -- before the chicken. She took Ricky's plate away and nearly filled it with coleslaw, he said.

Ricky didn't touch it, he said.

Holland said he carried Ricky to bed and the boy felt cold to the touch, so he tucked him under a brown fleece blanket and turned off the light. He then helped his wife with the other children and went to a gas station to get "a treat" for her.

As he and his wife headed to bed, Holland said he noticed a light on in Ricky's room. He found Ricky uncovered and unmoving in a fetal position on his bed, eyes open and pupils dilated.

"I didn't mean to do it!" Lisa Holland screamed from the hallway, he said. "She was telling me to get his body out of the house."

Holland then explained how he took charge of cleaning up Ricky's bedroom, wrapping Ricky's body in a blue sheet from his bed and garbage bags and concocting the story for police that Ricky had run away. Holland then took Ricky's body to a swampy area near Dansville and pushed it out into the water.

On the way home, Holland said he stopped his pickup in front of a military ammunition dump and reflected on his actions.

"I wondered why I did what I did," he said.

Lisa Holland's attorney, Andrew Abood, began cross-examining Tim Holland on Wednesday afternoon, focusing on changes in his accounts and secrets he kept from his wife and others about his

Dad let Ricky suffer to please his wife

childhood and about being forced to resign from the Department of Army because he had downloaded pornography.

The cross-examination is to continue today.

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October 12, 2006

Ricky's dad watched his son die

Karen Bouffard / The Detroit News

LANSING -- Ricky Holland's last meal would have been his favorite: Kentucky Fried Chicken and mashed potatoes.

But the child was so weak on July 1, 2005, his adopted father, Tim Holland, wedged him up against the table so he wouldn't fall over, and his head drooped down over his plate, according to Holland's often macabre testimony Wednesday during the murder trial of his wife, Lisa.

It was a gruesome contrast that reflected life in the Holland house for at least eight days before the 7-year-old's death. Life continued as normal -- down to mundane chores such as fixing the air conditioner -- even as Ricky descended further into agony, Tim Holland told Ingham County jurors.

Ricky never even had a chance to eat his chicken, his father testified. He died after dinner, when his father returned from a trip to a gas station to buy his wife a "treat," Tim Holland said.

"He's laying in a fetal position, and he's got all this red stuff all over his face, running down over his T-shirt," Tim Holland told the 12 jurors and two alternates. "His pupils were wide open, and his eyelids were wide open.

"Lisa's standing in the hallway screaming, 'I didn't mean to do it.' "

Prosecutors allege Lisa Holland, 34, hit the boy with a tack hammer and let him languish for a week before he died.

Holland's gruesome story

The descent began when Tim Holland arrived home in Williamston from a business trip on June 24, 2005, according to the 37-year-old who pleaded guilty to second-degree murder last month in exchange for testimony against his wife, who also faces child abuse charges.

His son seemed fine when he left. When he returned, Ricky was standing with his face to a wall and the boy wore nothing but a pull-up diaper, Holland said. His hair was matted from a 2-inch gash in his head; Lisa was in the living room with her father, Tim Taylor of Williamston, who sat nearby in an easy chair, Holland said.

"(Ricky) was dirty and he smelled; he didn't even recognize me," Holland told the jury. "Lisa said he dove headfirst into the kiddie pool. ... It wasn't even set up yet."

The days that followed were worse, Holland testified.

The next day, he told jurors, he wanted to take Ricky to a doctor, but Lisa yanked him away and said she'd take him herself. The two left for a few hours. When they returned, Ricky's head wound wasn't cleaned or stitched, Holland said.

He admitted that was the last time he tried to take his dying son to a doctor -- even though he went himself for an ankle injury a few days later.

Instead, Holland claimed, he tried to nurse the boy. About 20 times, Holland said, he held Ricky's favorite green goblet up to his lips to drink, but the fluids dripped down his child. His legs were like "dead weights," Holland said, as he moved Ricky to the living room from his bedroom several times a day.

"I tried to talk to him but he didn't respond, he didn't even seem aware of my being there," he said. .."He just sat there on the floor .. his favorite show was on, 'Sponge Bob Square Pants,' but he didn't even seem aware of it. I had to make sure he was propped up so he wasn't falling down."

At dinner on the day Ricky died, the child was barely conscious.

"I put a plate of chicken legs and mashed potatoes in front of him, all his favorite things," Tim Holland said. "(Lisa) took the plate away from him and replaced it with a plate of coleslaw.

"She said he had to eat that before he could have anything else."

Tim Holland left the table. When he returned, the coleslaw was gone and Ricky's head was slumped over a tumbler that was three-quarters full of "red liquid."

Tim Holland stopped short of identifying it as blood.

Credibility under fire

That evening, Tim Holland carried Ricky up to his bedroom, covered him up, turned out the light, and then left to drive to a Citgo gas station to buy Lisa a snack.

When he got home, he noticed the light was on in Ricky's room.

Ricky was dead.

During more than four hours of testimony, it was the only time Tim Holland appeared to sob.

He composed himself and later told jurors that Lisa Holland begged him to bury the body.

"I cleaned up the mess," Tim Holland said.

"I did that. I went to the kitchen. I got a white kitchen-sized garbage bag and a black leaf-sized garbage bag. I wrapped Ricky in a bedspread and cleaned up the bed. I put Ricky into the white garbage bag and tied that off. And then I tied Ricky into the black bag and tied that off."

Holland said he loaded Ricky into the back of his truck while Lisa prepared a backpack containing Ricky's pants, shirts and socks. She handed Tim the backpack in the front seat.

A few days later, the couple reported Ricky missing. His body was eventually found in a swampy area in Ingham County.

Cross-examination started Wednesday and defense attorneys hammered at Tim Holland's credibility, forcing him to admit he was fired from his civilian job with the U.S. Army for downloading thousands of pages of pornography and sending e-mails soliciting escorts from his computer.

Perhaps most damaging, he admitted telling detectives on Jan. 25 -- just two days before blaming Lisa for the murder and leading police to Ricky's body -- he never saw her hit their children, and would have called protective services if he did.

He is expected to return to the stand today, the 22nd day of the trial. Throughout 35 witnesses, not one has claimed to see Lisa kill the boy.

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Oct 12, 1:06 PM EDT

Husband admits he lied to police, public in son's death

By **DAVID EGGERT**
Associated Press Writer

LANSING, Mich. (AP) -- Tim Holland testified Thursday that he never saw his wife hit their 7-year-old adopted son in the head with a hammer, despite telling that to detectives in January.

Under questioning from a defense attorney for Lisa Holland, who is charged with killing the boy, Tim acknowledged numerous discrepancies between his previous statements and what he told the jury in his much-anticipated testimony Wednesday.

He now says Lisa told him she hit Ricky with a hammer, but he never actually saw her do it.

Tim Holland, 37, has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder. He agreed to testify against Lisa, 33, in exchange for prosecutors dropping first-degree murder charges against him.

Ricky vanished from his home July 1, 2005. His adoptive parents said he had run away, sparking a nine-day search by 1,700 volunteers and hundreds of law enforcement officers.

But Tim Holland in January led authorities to Ricky's body in a marshy Ingham County game area. He says Lisa Holland killed the boy and he disposed of the body.

The defense on Thursday played a radio interview in which Tim Holland asked listeners to look for Ricky after his disappearance, even though he knew the boy was dead.

The trial began about a month ago. It will continue Tuesday with the defense finishing its cross-examination of Tim Holland, and then the prosecution doing a redirect examination.

David Eggert can be reached at [deggert\(at\)ap.org](mailto:deggert(at)ap.org)

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10/11/2006

Parents arraigned on child abuse charge

Stacy Langley , The Huron Daily Tribune

BAD AXE — The Bad Axe couple accused of purposely injuring their baby, causing life-threatening injuries including skull fractures and bleeding on the brain, appeared in Huron County Circuit Court Tuesday afternoon.

The parents, Stardust and Ryan Welshans, were arraigned separately on a felony charge of first-degree child abuse involving the couple's second son who was less than 1-month-old at the time he was injured in early February.

Stardust Welshans was first to be arraigned. Her attorney James Woodworth told the court his client would "stand mute" to the charge that carries a possible penalty of up to 15 years in prison if she's convicted.

Woodworth requested additional time to prepare for the jury trial, telling the court he plans to pursue an independent psychological examination for Stardust Welshans prior to trial, which was one of the reasons he would need more time to prepare. Stardust Welshans already has undergone one psychological examination prior to her preliminary examination in Huron County District Court last month.

Huron County Prosecuting Attorney Mark J. Gaertner also attended Tuesday's arraignment. He told the court he expects a jury trial to take "three solid days" for both sides to present their case which likely will include testimony from a number of medical doctors.

Knoblock set the jury trial date for Feb. 6 for both Stardust and Ryan Welshans. Gaertner is asking the court to keep the cases consolidated for the jury, but Woodworth told the court he intends to seek a separate trial for his client, an issue that is expected to be heard by Knoblock at a later date.

Ryan Welshans also faces a charge of first-degree child abuse, but Gaertner added a habitual offender second offense enhancement to the child abuse charge. If convicted, that would add seven and a half more years to the possible maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

At the time of Ryan Welshans' arraignment, his attorney David B. Herrington, told the court his client would "stand mute" to the charge of first-degree child abuse, being a habitual offender second offense.

Gaertner said the reason for the enhancement is that Ryan Welshans has a prior February 2001 conviction of fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct out of the Clinton Township Circuit Court. Welshans served approximately 16 months in prison and remains on the state's sex offender registry list.

Bond for Ryan and Stardust Welshans was set at \$2,500 personal recognizance with a pretrial release order as set by the district court that the Public Guardian find suitable housing for each of them before they can be released from jail.

Ryan Welshans had been released from jail for a short time late this summer when suitable housing was found for him, but after he violated the release order his bond was revoked. He continues to be lodged in the Huron County Jail while Stardust Welshans currently is lodged in the Tuscola County Jail.

At the time the child was injured, Ryan and Stardust Welshans were living separately. And under a court order from Huron County Probate Court, Ryan Welshans was to be the baby's caregiver while the court only allowed supervised visitation between Stardust Welshans, the baby and the couple's older son (who already had been removed from the home and placed in foster care). Testimony during the preliminary examination in late September revealed that Ryan Welshans allowed Stardust Welshans into his home the weekend the baby was injured.

Detectives testified that several versions of the events were relayed to them, but both said their actions led to the baby sustaining injuries.

The investigation into the child's injuries started began on Feb. 4 after Ryan Welshans called 9-1-1 requesting an ambulance for the baby who was reportedly having difficulty breathing. The child was rushed to Huron Medical Center and then taken to St. Mary's Hospital in Saginaw for treatment of life-threatening injuries.

During a hearing in Huron County Probate Court this summer, both Ryan and Stardust Welshans agreed to termination of their parental rights of both their sons. Both children are in foster care.

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Police: Mom Smothered Babies For Crying

POSTED: 2:46 am EDT October 12, 2006
UPDATED: 3:10 am EDT October 12, 2006

MONCKS CORNER, S.C. -- Authorities in South Carolina said a woman confessed to killing her twin 9-month-old sons because they were crying in her bed.

Police said the mother, Lakeia White, 20, told them she went back to sleep after smothering the boys.

White was charged with homicide by child abuse. Officials said it appeared the boys were asphyxiated.

The Rev. Willis Goodwin, a minister who baptized the twins two weeks ago said they were "beautiful kids." Goodwin said their mother was a "very, very quiet and orderly girl."

The killings took place in Moncks Corner, which is 30 miles north of Charleston.

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THE DAILY Reporter

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Dwater's comments spark harsher sentence from Judge Cherry

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By Don Reid-Staff Writer

COLDWATER — Larry Dwater, 47, talked himself onto the Michigan Sex Offender Registry when he appeared before Branch County Circuit Court Judge Michael Cherry for sentencing on a charge of child abuse.

Dwater was accused of molesting a 14-year-old girl when he stayed overnight at a Coldwater house on Feb. 21, 2005. The father of the girls and Dwater had been out drinking that night.

According to the police report, the girl said she woke up to find Dwater sitting on her bed with his hands under his underwear. He left when she told him to stop.

The parents told the girl not to report the original incident and only filed a complaint with the Coldwater Police Department when the grandmother said she would if they did not.

She agreed to reduction of the charges from criminal sexual conduct (CSC) third degree instead of trial on the original charge.

Defense attorney J. R. Colbeck explained that some evidence Dwater wanted to introduce about the girl was not admissible under Michigan law.

"This would have been a difficult trial for the victim," he explained.

The victim appeared and told Judge Cherry she had lost trust in males as a result of the incident. She also asked for sex offender registration, not mandatory under the child abuse plea and a request Dwater be kept away from parks and playgrounds. Dwater shot back he was in a park first when the victim came there.

"She's causing problems," he said. "She's actually molesting all of us."

With those comments made, Judge Cherry increased the recommended probation from three to five years, ordered Dwater to jail for nine months and to register as a sex offender. Judge Cherry also imposed — as a condition of his probation — that he have no contact with anyone under age 17, no access to computers and/or sexual materials and not to be within 1,000 feet of a school, playground, park or other place used by children.

Members of the families got into arguments outside the courtroom and had to be escorted from the courthouse after the sentencing.

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12 October 2006 08:03

UN report uncovers global child abuse

By David Usborne in New York

Published: 12 October 2006

A shocking picture of physical abuse and mistreatment of children in countries in every corner of the world, ranging from corporal punishment in schools to forced prostitution, rape and mutilation, was revealed in a survey by the United Nations last night.

The report, requested by secretary general Kofi Annan four years ago, says international conventions on human rights for children have flatly failed to guarantee protections for the most vulnerable members of society. While abuse may be at its worst in the developing world, no country is guiltless, it says.

Violence can be perpetrated by governments, by criminals but also by the family, the report notes. It recalls the words of a girl interviewed in an unnamed east Asian country. "With these two hands my mother holds me, cares for me, this I love... With these two hands, my mother hits me, this I hate."

"The core message," concludes Paolo Sergio Pinheiro, the study's author, "is that no violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable. There should be no more excuses". He recommends urgent action to hold governments accountable for ensuring children are treated as "full citizens, not as mini-human beings or property of their families".

While Mr Pinheiro was helped by many international organisations as well as by testimony from children in several countries, he says many of the offences are hidden in the shadows.

He nonetheless offers a range of grim statistics, including a finding that 53,000 children were victims of murder in 2002. His report stops short of naming countries with the worst records on protecting children's rights.

Louise Arbour, the UN's High Commissioner on Human Rights, said the survey takes the lid off a global scandal. "A veil of silence covers violence against children, yet abuses are so pervasive that no country can ignore them, and no society can claim to be immune from them," she said.

The British-based charity Save the Children, which, with its chapters worldwide, collaborated closely with the compiling of the report, also noted yesterday that more than one million children are imprisoned worldwide, of which 90 per cent were found guilty of only minor offences.

Violence in prisons and other, often state-run, institutions, including hospitals and orphanages, many holding children in squalid conditions, is highlighted in the survey. As one child, who had suffered imprisonment, told researchers: "Sometimes one day in prison felt like a year. But after 10 days you get used to it and you don't cry as much."

Some of the violence is perpetrated in the guise of medical treatment, the report says, noting that "in some cases children as young as nine are subjected to electro-convulsive treatment" without any anaesthesia or relaxants".

Also explored is violence, sometimes sexual, within families and at schools as well as the plight of children caught in trafficking, bonded labour and the child-sex industry. Every year sees another million children driven into the pornography and prostitution industries, the report says, adding, "many are coerced, kidnapped, sold and deceived into these activities, or are victims of trafficking".

Citing figures from the World Health Organisation, it asserts that 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18, "experienced forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual violence involving physical contact", in 2002.

The murder rate among minors was twice as high in low-income countries than in the developed world, the report found. But sexual abuse in the home is a blight shared by all nations. In 21 countries, most of them industrialised, as many as 36 per cent of women and 29 per cent of men said they had been the victims of sexual abuse during childhood. "Most of the abuse occurred within the family circle," the report said.

As many as 77 countries sanction violent punishment of children found guilty of crimes great or small, ranging from execution to corporal

retribution including caning, flogging, stoning or even, in some countries, amputation.

How children are exploited

- * According to the World Health Organisation, up to 53,000 children are murdered worldwide each year.
- * Between 80 and 93 per cent of children suffer some form of physical punishment in their homes; a third are punished using implements.
- * In 2002, the WHO estimated that 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 experienced some form of forced sexual intercourse or violence.
- * 218 million children worldwide are labourers, 126 million of whom work in hazardous environments.
- * 1.8 million are involved in prostitution or pornography and 1.2 million have been trafficked.
- * Up to 275 million witness domestic abuse annually.
- * Eight million worldwide are in residential care.
- * There are 250,000 child soldiers in the world.
- * According to Amnesty International, 40 per cent of soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo are children. 11,000 have still yet to be disarmed.
- * One billion children live in countries where it is legal to beat pupils.
- * Save the Children says a million children worldwide have been imprisoned.

SOURCES: WHO, UN, AI and Save The Children

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Children leaving care need more opportunities

Posted: 12 October 2006 | [Subscribe Online](#)

writes **Gordon Carson**

Children should never be able to leave care without the opportunity to get into a job or further education and without having somewhere to live, Community Care Live children and families heard today.

Mike Lindsay, head of advice at the **Office of England's Children's Rights Director**, pointed out that local authorities are among "the single biggest providers of employment, accommodation and learning opportunities in their area" and said: "If you are acting as a good corporate parent you should take those children into your family business."

Lindsay also said that children in care should have greater powers to make representation about issues affecting their care. He pointed out that **Section 8 of the Children Act 1989**, which refers to residence and contact orders in family proceedings, does not apply to looked-after children

He said: "The official answer [from the government] is that looked-after children don't need that because the local authority, as a corporate parent, will make a decision in their best interest and even if they didn't they have access to statutory complaints procedures.

"The only external remedy is for independent reviewing officers to refer cases to Cafcass under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 but it's now 2006 and not one independent reviewing officer has ever exercised that power."

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MRP: 'Granholt Has Failed Leadership Pattern'

MIRS, October 11, 2006

Today, with TV cameras rolling, Michigan Republican Party (MRP) Chair Saul **ANUZIS** said that Gov. Jennifer **GRANHOLM** has a history dating back to 1994 of failing to live up to her promises in protecting the children under the care of the government she represents.

This topic was touched on but not pursued by Republican gubernatorial nominee Dick **DeVOS** during his televised debate with Tuesday night.

Anuzis was armed with thick, 100-plus-page "documentation," supposedly showing that the Governor failed to confront sexual and physical abuse of juveniles in the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility (WCJDF) when she was corporation counsel for Wayne County in the mid-1990s.

In response, Granholt Spokesman Chris **DeWITT** characterized the attack as the MRP's attempting to compensate for a sagging DeVos' campaign.

"The Governor was the attorney for the county at a time when the county was taking action to address long-term systemic problems in their juvenile detention facility. Her advocacy led to the county revamping its juvenile justice system including the construction of a state-of-the-art new juvenile facility.

"The Republicans have reached a new low with this attack," DeWitt continued. "It is horrific that they have reached this level, but not surprising considering how poorly the DeVos campaign is doing with voters."

For his news conference today, Anuzis was seated in front of large photographs of seven-year-old murder victim Ricky **HOLLAND** and Patrick **SELEPAK**, the parolee mistakenly released earlier this year who when released, promptly went on a murder spree.

"No one is arguing that the Governor is in favor of abusing children," Anuzis said. "This is not an attack on Governor Granholt personally. This is highlighting that Governor Granholt cannot manage and cannot lead this state. We all know about Ricky Holland and Patrick Selepak.

"What we now know is that this inability to manage costs not only Ricky Holland's life, but many other children the state is supposed to be protecting," Anuzis continued. "Patrick Selepak was not the first man released from prison by mistake to go on a killing spree since this Governor took office. Now we know that this inability to manage, this failure to produce results goes back to Granholt's days in Wayne County as corporation counsel. As you will see in the documents we provide, Granholt knew of abuse, promised results and failed to deliver."

The gist of the claims issued by Anuzis is that Granholt has a long history of promising results and not delivering. This fresh attack, coming 27 days before the election, is similar to the attacks Democrats have launched against DeVos in that the simple fact that the candidate being attacked probably can't fully deflect the charge because of the complexity of all the history involved and the layers of accusations involved in the attack.

Skeptical reporters questioned Anuzis as to whether the accusations against Granholt weren't just a GOP version of Granholt's type of allegations against DeVos on Alterra, the nursing home chain he once held stock in.

Granholt and Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) Chair Mark **BREWER** obviously coordinated the Alterra hit on DeVos last week. Some observers, however, believe it may have backfired, which could explain why she didn't bring it up again at the Tuesday debate.

Anuzis argued the today's news conference was about a serious issue, because Granholt had personally weighed in on the charges against the detention facility in the 1990s, while DeVos was just a "passive" stockholder in Alterra, with no more control over the company than any other stockholder.

The MRP claims that in December 1994, the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility was investigated by the U.S. Department of Justice, which found numerous violations of federal and state law. These violations included sexual, physical, and emotional abuse of children by staff members, failure to discipline and investigate employees accused of abuse, inadequate training of staff members, severe overcrowding, inadequate medical care and mental health counseling and roach-and rodent-infested kitchens.

According to Anuzis, Granholm responded by admitting the shortcomings in a letter to the U.S. Department of Justice, stating the "county can address most of the problems within seven weeks ..." She said that the county would respond "in the form of action" and that there would be "zero tolerance of abuse." Granholm went on to say that Wayne County has the "means and intent to produce lasting results," and that "the will exerted to move these corrections forward is historic."

"Sadly, the abuse continued for four more years and went unchecked by Granholm and other Wayne County officials," Anuzis commented. "If it wasn't bad enough that Granholm failed to act, failed to pursue negligent and abusive employees with criminal charges. In fact, at least one staff member reported abuse directly to Granholm's office and she still refused to request a criminal investigation."

Anuzis maintains that numerous employees of the WCJDF were fired for reporting abuses at the facility and sued the county for violating the Federal Whistleblower's Act. As corporation council, Granholm signed off on out-of-court settlements with these whistleblowers.

Anuzis said Granholm turned around as Governor and hired two people involved with the WCJDF, Leonard **DIXON** and Jeriel **HEARD**, in her administration. Dixon was named State of Michigan director of the Bureau of Juvenile Justice and Heard was made chair of the Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice.

"She has a history of hiring her political cronies," Anuzis said. "I don't think any Republican would hire either Dixon or Heard."

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October 12, 2006

Around Metro Detroit: Spotlight

Bloomfield Hills author helps lift homeless

Kim Kozlowski / The Detroit News

Leah Susan Black-Elk has lived through many crises during her 25 years.



She was raped when she was 14. Her mother abandoned her when she was 16. She was in an abusive relationship and now is homeless.

Black-Elk was suicidal and hopeless, but that has changed since she participated in a program to help her make positive life changes.

"Today," Black-Elk said, "I feel positive and very happy, very lucky to have the people I have in my life."

Black-Elk was one of seven homeless women who graduated this week from a program known as the Empowerment Show, or the E-Show, the brainchild of Charlene Proctor of Bloomfield Hills. Proctor got her doctorate from the University of Michigan and was a social scientist, traveling the world as an architect. But then she decided that she wanted to use her logic and analytical skills to help empower women.

"If I didn't," said Proctor, 47, "I was not going to be complete as a person."

In 2001, Proctor founded the Goddess Network, an online spiritual and educational community of 30,000 women across the country. This year she published two books, "Let Your Goddess Grow!" and "The Women's Book of Empowerment."

But Proctor, 47, pushed her reach further by turning to homeless women. She reached them through the Lighthouse PATH, a Pontiac-based agency that provides transitional housing, job training and life skills to homeless women for up to two years.

She taught these women to stay positive for success in their futures.

"Sometime when we get up every day we say we can't do something or we're not good enough, we look back at old mental programs that don't serve us well," Proctor said.

Proctor's program, which launched last summer, has been held twice a week for the past seven weeks.

A highlight of the program occurred this week, when the women got makeovers from professional hairstylists and makeup artists, completing the inner and outer change.

Graduation from the program followed.

You can reach Kim Kozlowski at (313) 222-2024 or kkozlowski@detnews.com.

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Michigan Report

October 11, 2006

STATES DO BETTER IN MEDICAID COSTS

America's 50 states had some good news in terms of overall Medicaid costs in the 2005-06 fiscal year, as total costs for the year increased by an average of 2.8 percent, according to the California-based Kaiser Commission of Medicaid and the Uninsured, the smallest increase in a decade.

For the states on average, the 2005-06 fiscal year was also the first time since 1998 that overall state revenues grew at a faster rate than the rate of Medicaid spending, the [report](#) said.

The report did not breakdown actual changes in Medicaid costs and income for each state, though it did detail changes each state made in eligibility and provider reimbursement.

In the 2004-05 fiscal year, the report said, Medicaid costs increased by an average of 6.3 percent, and in the 2003-04 fiscal year they increased by 7.4 percent for all of the states. In the 2001-02 fiscal year, when the nation was in an economic recession, average Medicaid spending was up by 12.4 percent.

Among the primary reasons the increase in Medicaid spending was so low in 2005-06, the report said, was that enrollment growth was dramatically slower during the year, growing by just 1.6 percent during the year.

The states were also helped by changes in Medicare, the health insurance program for the elderly, that transferred some of the prescription costs for dual-eligible senior citizens (those eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid) to Medicare.

The report said that just 4 percent of the Medicaid population account for 48 percent of the expenditures.

The report also said there was concern about the potential federal budget changes, as well as concerns about a slowing economy, could have on Medicaid expenditures for the 2006-07 fiscal year.



Slaying trial nears conclusion

Thursday, October 12, 2006

GRAND RAPIDS -- In statements to police, Edwin Lario-Munoz denied strangling a pregnant Silvia Sanchez-Parada, 28, and blamed the killing on her husband, Leoncio Garcia-Lopez. Later, he agreed with Grand Rapids police Detective Gregory Griffin that he lied when he blamed the husband for the Oct. 14, 2005, killing in the rented house they shared at 848 Baxter St. SE, but insisted: "I didn't do anything to her." After playing the recording for jurors on Wednesday, the prosecution rested. The case is likely to go to the jury later today, Kent County Circuit Judge Dennis Kolenda said. Jurors will consider a second-degree murder charge.

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Plymouth day care probed

Staff accused of ignoring abuse

BY KORIE WILKINS

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

October 12, 2006

A Plymouth day care facility is under state investigation following allegations that staffers failed to report signs of abuse on 2-year-old Allison Newman, whose foster mom is charged in her death.

Maureen Sorbet, spokeswoman for the Michigan Department of Human Services, confirmed Wednesday that Childtime Learning Center is under investigation. She would not comment further. The source of the allegations was unclear.

According to Amy Popp, spokeswoman for the center, Allison, who died Sept. 22, had been at Childtime about nine months. She said staff members were devastated after Allison died and that an internal investigation showed management was unaware of any suspicion about abuse.

"We've never had a violation for failure to report," Popp said.

Allison's foster mother, 40-year-old Carol Poole of Canton, was charged earlier this month with felony murder, first-degree child abuse and involuntary manslaughter. Poole told police the girl accidentally hit her head; an autopsy showed that Allison had a traumatic head injury.

According to Maria Miller, a spokeswoman for the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, Poole -- who is in custody -- will be back in court Nov. 13 for a preliminary examination.

Childtime operates day care centers nationwide. Diane Borushko, regional director for Childtime, said she was told a state investigator came to the Plymouth facility after receiving a complaint that staffers had noticed signs of abuse on Allison but failed to report them to authorities.

Borushko denied the allegations and said that upon hiring, employees are trained on how to spot and report possible abuse.

"We do, as a corporation, follow very strict licensing guidelines," she said.

But according to Michigan records, the Plymouth center, at 45678 Helm St., has had problems. In January, the center was investigated after a staff member was accused of picking up a 3-year-old girl by the arm, causing an injury. The staff member allegedly had been angry with the child for not cleaning up as directed, the records show. The employee was disciplined.

And in November 2005, the center was investigated after an unannounced inspection found too many children in a room supervised by too few employees. The facility took corrective measures, according

to the records.

The facility is licensed by the state through Nov. 7.

Contact **KORIE WILKINS** at 248-315-5186 or kwilkins@freepress.com.

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Article published Oct 12, 2006
Seminar shines light on elder abuse

By NICOLE GERRINGTimes Herald

They make up only a small portion of known domestic-violence victims. Yet many more elderly people are believed to be abused - by a caregiver, a relative or an acquaintance.

"It's a forgotten population," said Jenny Schultz, director of Safe Horizons, which operates a domestic-violence shelter in Port Huron.

To educate the public about the prevalence of elder abuse, the St. Clair County Domestic Violence Council will have an elder-abuse seminar Friday.

It's a problem leaders of local agencies said they are beginning to confront more frequently.

There are two common misconceptions about elder abuse, said Mary Allen, a contractor with the volunteer organization Minnesota Network on Abuse in Later Life.

One misconception, she said, is most elderly people are abused in institutions by incompetent, or demented, employees.

Another misconception is stress causes abuse, which suggests victims are partially responsible because of their dependency on the caregiver, said Allen, who will lead Friday's seminar in the St. Clair County Administrative Office Building in Port Huron.

"Close to 90% of cases of elder abuse is abuse by a family member or trusted loved one," she said. "Only about 11% of people over 65 live in an assisted home or facility we think of when we think of elder abuse."

Abuse can be psychological, emotional and physical. It can involve neglect, violence, sexual assault and financial exploitation.

During the seminar, Allen will address how social-service groups can create informal partnerships to support victims. Officials at many agencies are not aware of what is available for elders who have experienced abuse, Allen said.

Safe Horizons offers shelter, counseling and a crisis line through which victims can discuss their problems with a counselor. Few older victims enter shelters, however, because they may fear losing their independence, economic status or not being able to adjust to a noisy environment, Schultz said.

Few shelters are designed specifically for the elderly population, Allen said.

"The shelter can be a chaotic place," Schultz said. "We have a whole house of people in crisis. Sometimes it's harder for older, battered women to come into that environment."

There are legal remedies to physical abuse and exploitation, said Sarah Prout Stubbs, supervising attorney at Lakeshore Legal Aid, a nonprofit, legal-aid agency in Port Huron.

Stubbs' firm has seen a 20% increase in elder-abuse cases this year.

"Our community is becoming aware that this is not something we're going to accept in our community," she said.

Stubbs said some caregivers do not wash, feed or give proper medication to their family members. Others, she said, drain the bank account of the person in their care.

"I have seen people who have lost their life savings," Stubbs said.

Allen said abusers seek power and control, and abuse is perpetuated by ageism.

"We dismiss the older population," she said. "They're an acceptable victim, an acceptable target."

Many victims keep silent because they were raised not to discuss sex or domestic problems, Allen said.

"There's a certain amount of shame connected - 'What did I do wrong to raise this person to be this way?'" she said. "There's also a fear that 'Without this person, there will be no one to take care of me, or there's the fear that I'll end up in a nursing home.'"

As baby boomers grow older and require more care, communities will need to cope with abuse in later life, Allen said.

"As the population ages, it's more and more crucial that we understand it. The baby boomers turned 60 in January, so we know that in the next 20 years, the population will be getting older and older. A lot of people aren't looking at it."



Muskegon Chronicle

Teen troupe helps others avoid risky behaviors

Thursday, October 12, 2006

By Federico Martinez

CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Somber teenagers gather around the casket of a dead friend who insisted on catching a ride with a drunken driver after a party.

Two once-macho teens fight back tears as they discuss the challenges they now face from their girlfriends' unexpected pregnancies.

An anguished girl seeks comfort from a friend after learning she has tested positive for HIV/AIDS.

These scenarios were performed in skits by "Informate," a troupe of migrant teenagers who live at Chase Farms in Walkerville during the summer and fall.

Their audience on a recent night included nearly three dozen youths whose families are also migrants.

"I write the skits from my own personal experiences and those of my friends," said 16-year-old Jesse Alfaro, who is chief script writer for the group. Other members of Informate include Stephanie Gonzalez, 13, Clarissa Calzada, 14, and Jesus Arellano, 13.

A federally funded program, Informate is designed to educate migrant farmworkers about the dangers of drug use, consequences of unprotected sex and ways to respond to violent confrontations.

Informate's other purpose is to keep older teens in school over the summer and out of the fields where many traditionally work in the fields. The students were paid \$5.50 an hour for their work in Informate.

They perform at various migrant camps, churches and community events throughout the year and introduce new skits every week for dozens of youths who attend an after-school program at Chase Farms.

"It's fun," said 13-year-old Jesus Arias, who has attended every one of the group's performances at Chase this year. "We learned that HIV/AIDS can get into anyone. You have to protect yourself."

Informate members use large doses of humor, music and over-the-top dramatic flourishes during their skits. What the group lacks in polish, they shine with sincerity.

Their audiences, which clearly relate to the stories acted out, sit mesmerized. Sometimes audience members become so engrossed in a scene they will yell out advice, or issue a stern warning to a character.

Thirteen-year-old Merlina Pitones said the skits reflect real-life issues.

"Pregnancy is the worst problem for teens today," Pitones said.

The four members of Informate also serve as camp "teen health aides," a role that puts them in the role of "big brother" or "big sister" to the other children at the migrant camp. The teens receive extensive training to prepare them for their jobs.

Other children at the camp often come to them seeking advice about subjects that they might not feel comfortable asking their parents, Alfaro said. The four teen aides consulted with youths in the camp 260 times this past summer, according to records they kept.

Teenage males most frequently wanted to know where they could get condoms or which offered the best protection, Alfaro said. Informate members are trained to emphasize abstinence, but also address other options, such as using condoms. Skits also address such issues as drug abuse and drinking and driving.

Program Coordinator Elizabeth Chavey helps the students hone their acting skills and schedules their performances. She said she believes the program is effective because Informate addresses, "all of the issues" migrant teens are confronted with. Their nomadic lifestyles often make them more susceptible to peer pressure, Chavey said.

Informate addresses cultural issues that other programs might not take into consideration, Chavey said.

For example, although teen pregnancy is a concern, Hispanic migrant families tend to be close-knit, so a baby has a stronger extended family support network in place when they are born, Chavey said.

Informate's message boils down to a message that should be universal to everyone, Calzada said.

"If you make a bad choice, it will haunt you forever," she said.

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Forum is Thursday on child welfare system

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

By **Melissa Burden**

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FLINT - A community forum to answer questions on the child welfare system and available services and resources is scheduled for 4-6 p.m. Thursday at Flint Southwestern Academy, 1420 W. 12th St.

The Genesee County Department of Human Services and Genesee County Family Court are hosting the forum.

A panel of speakers will be available to answer questions and respond to concerns regarding child protective services, foster care, juvenile justice, licensing and adoption and information on how cases go through the court system.

Community organizations also will be distributing information about programs and services.

- Melissa Burden

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WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 11, 2006 Last modified: *Tuesday, October 10, 2006 9:31 AM EDT*

Dudley Spade, Jim Koehn talk about jobs, human services at forum

The two men are running to represent most of Lenawee County in the Michigan House.

By [Erik Gable](#)

Daily Telegram News Editor

ADRIAN — The two men running to represent most of Lenawee County in the Michigan House were among the candidates taking part in a forum Monday night at the Lenawee County Human Services Building, but both incumbent Dudley Spade and challenger Jim Koehn had to leave before the forum was finished, limiting their involvement to five-minute opening statements.



CANDIDATES FORUM: Leslie Mortimer and Dudley Spade talk Monday night during a forum at the Lenawee County Human Services Building. — Telegram photo by [Erik Gable](#)

Spade, a Democrat, and Koehn, a Republican, were the only pair of opponents at the forum. In addition to several county candidates, the other participants were state Sen. Cameron Brown, R-Fawn River Twp.; state Rep. Leslie Mortimer, R-Horton; congressional candidate Sharon Renier, a Democrat from Munith; and Marianne Udow, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, representing Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

The forum's main purpose was to discuss human services issues, but jobs and the economy ended up a topic of discussion as well, both through candidates' statements and through questions from the audience.

Spade, who spent 17 years as the controller for the Boysville youth facility before going to work for Starr Commonwealth, a boarding school for troubled teenagers, introduced himself as "an accountant by profession, a fiscal conservative." He reminded the audience that Michigan's Children, a child advocacy group, named him one of its "visionary freshman legislators" last year.

"Advocating on behalf of children has been my life's work," he said.

Koehn began by talking about his background as a lifelong Adrian-area resident, attending St. Joseph Academy for elementary school and Adrian public schools after that. He then moved on to fiscal policy.

"I'm here tonight to tell you things you need to hear, not things you want to hear," he said.

Koehn said the state needs to "spend the money we have, not the money we hope we have." He also faulted Democrats in the Legislature who want to come up with a replacement for the state's single business tax, which the Legislature recently voted to repeal. He said replacing the tax would be "nothing more than a tax shift," and argued if the state cut its spending, it would not have to replace the \$1.9 billion tax at all.

Mortimer, whose district includes Cambridge Township in Lenawee County, talked about her background as a registered dietitian before talking about several health issues. She first discussed mental health parity, which means covering mental health treatment under medical insurance, saying health care "encompasses the whole body" and arguing that mental health parity would make employees more productive. She also talked about her involvement in

the Healthy Kids Task Force.

Mortimer is opposed by Mike Simpson, a Democrat from Jackson County's Liberty Township.

Brown, who represents the 16th Senate District, is opposed by Timothy Christner, a Democrat from Sturgis.

Brown talked about both economic issues and human services. Responding to a question about job creation, he said Michigan needs a two-pronged approach, combining the elimination of the single business tax with diversifying the economy to reduce the state's dependence on the Big Three automakers.

Brown also said the way the single business tax is structured has essentially penalized businesses for offering health insurance coverage; he said the state should provide tax incentives for offering health insurance instead.

-- CLOSE WINDOW--



Seven area schools off sanctions list

Tuesday, October 10, 2006

MIKE ROCHA

THE SAGINAW NEWS

State Board of Education members today will laud students and staff from almost 70 schools, including seven from the Saginaw Valley, who earned their way off the federal No Child Left Behind Act's sanctions list with improved test scores.

Officials recognized the Saginaw Preparatory Academy in Buena Vista Township, Bridgeport-Spaulding Middle School and Buena Vista's Brunkow Elementary School along with four Saginaw School District schools -- Central Middle, Webber Elementary, Loomis Academy and the former North Middle.

Brunkow Elementary School Principal Betty A. Chaney said there are many reasons for the turnaround. "This is a delight, something that is very positive for the school," Chaney said.

Improved Michigan Educational Assessment Program test scores helped the school achieve adequate yearly progress for the second consecutive year. Last year's third-grade and fourth-grade students' scores in math and reading were higher than the state average.

Administrators brought in turnaround specialists who went into the classrooms to assist teachers with their strategies and classroom skills.

Staff also set aside time for extra reading blocks where students were able to strengthen reading skills without interruption.

There also are Saturday sessions where students are able to receive even more help with reading and math.

"We have worked very hard here at Brunkow," Chaney said. "We have a staff who cares. We love our kids and the kids know this. But they also know we mean business."

Chaney credits parents who help make sure students are at school for both regular class sessions and for after-school help.

Schools facing sanctions must offer out-of-school supplemental tutoring, transportation to higher-performing schools and changes in staff.

Saginaw Preparatory, a charter school, has made strides since officials changed the name and dumped the old management company in 2004.

"It's nice to be recognized for what schools are supposed to be about -- education," said Saginaw Preparatory Principal Pamela Williams. "I'm very proud of our kids and our teachers. They've worked hard to turn this academy around."

The Bridgeport-Spaulding Community School District had three buildings -- the elementary, middle and high schools -- all make adequate yearly progress.

"It's extremely exciting for us to be in that mix," said Superintendent Desmon R. Daniel. "This is a true testament how hard the teachers and the students have worked." v